

NEWS RELEASE

CORPS OF ENGINEERS DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE RELEASE OF TRIPLOID GRASS CARP FOR HYDRILLA MANAGEMENT AT WALTER F. GEORGE LAKE, ALABAMA-GEORGIA

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is conducting an Environmental Assessment for the management of hydrilla on Walter F. George Lake. This action is addressed in a Draft Environmental Assessment, prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality regulatory guidance in 40 CFR 1500-1508, and the USACE regulatory guidance in 33 CFR 230. The Draft Environmental Assessment document is available for public review and comments and has been posted on the Mobile District public access website at the following location:

<http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/pd/Pd1.htm>

Additional copies of the Draft Environmental Assessment have been placed for review at the USACE Walter F. George Lake Project Office, located at Fort Gaines, Georgia.

EVALUATION: Upon completion of the 15-day public coordination period set forth in this notice, the environmental assessment will be finalized and the final determination of the NEPA documentation requirements made. If the determination is to finalize the environmental assessment and prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact, these documents will be placed on the file in the Mobile District Office for further reference.

The decision whether to proceed with the proposed action will be based on the evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. The decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits that may be reasonably expected to accrue for the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof: conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood plain values, land use, navigation, recreation, energy needs, safety, consideration of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

COORDINATION: The USACE, Mobile District is soliciting comments from the general public, federal, state and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interest parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed activity. The USACE, Mobile District will use any comments received to determine whether or not to proceed with the proposed action. You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to other parties who may have an interest in the proposed action.

CORRESPONDENCE: Comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment should be directed to Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, ATTN: PD-EI,

PO Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001 or via email cesam-pd-ea@sam.usace.army.mil . Comments should be received no later than **15 May 2007**.